



Paul Ryan 2016: 5 Hurdles Facing GOP Presidential Hopeful

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Wisconsin Republican Congressman Paul Ryan has neither confirmed nor denied whether he will run for president in 2016. While many conservative Republicans are hopeful that he will throw his hat into the ring, Ryan still faces some hurdles that could impede his bid for the presidency.

1. Mitt Romney: Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, who chose Paul Ryan as his running mate in the 2012 presidential election, is also a potential 2016 GOP presidential candidate.

According to **Townhall**, a political insider has revealed information that Romney is once again considering a run for the White House. If this is the case, it presents a hurdle for Paul Ryan who has made it clear that he will not run in 2016 if Romney enters the race.

2. The Stimulus Act: As a fiscal hawk, Paul Ryan voted against President Obama's \$787 billion stimulus bill. However, Ryan took a lot of heat for also requesting stimulus funds for Wisconsin.

According to the **Los Angeles Times**, Ryan first denied the requests for funds but then later "acknowledged that his office had sought the money for his Wisconsin congressional district and took responsibility for it." This may be a hurdle for fiscal conservatives who question Ryan's fiscal integrity.

3. Fiscal voting record: Although Paul Ryan did vote against President Obama's stimulus bill, his track record of voting for "budget-busting" bills puts his fiscal hawk status in question.

According to the **Cato Institute**, during his first 14 years in congress Ryan voted for No Child Left Behind, the Iraq war, Medicare prescription drug entitlement, Head Start, the 2008 Economic Stimulus Act, extending unemployment benefits in 2008, the Troubled Asset Relief Program, the General Motors and Chrysler bailouts, and a 2009 \$192 billion anti-recession spending bill.

4. The Ryan budget: Paul Ryan's budget could help or hinder his bid for the White House in 2016. The budget plans to cut \$5 trillion in spending over the next 10 years, which makes fiscal hawks happy. However, how this is to be accomplished has generated controversy from both sides of the aisle.

According to **The New York Times**, "The new budget violates some tenets that both parties have tried to observe since the budget fights of 2011 and 2012. Those fights preserved a practice of cutting defense and nondefense programs almost equally while sparing the poorest Americans from the worst of the belt-tightening."

The Ryan budget raises military spending and while some conservatives may not take issue with this, many Libertarians do.

5. Substance over style: Paul Ryan puts forth solutions for the nation that, while effective, may seem heartless. He is less inclined to focus on creating a likeable image and more inclined to make difficult decisions for the greater good.

As **Politico** put it, "Paul Ryan's greatest strength is being the ultimate congressional technocrat — an even-keeled, intelligent thinker who grapples seriously with the nation's biggest fiscal challenges." However, Democrats like to paint Ryan as the "bad guy" who wants to cut health care, social security, and "push grandma off a cliff."